



Town of Paxton
Board of Selectmen
697 Pleasant Street, Paxton, MA 01612
(508) 754-7638 – phone (508) 797-0966 – fax
dparsons@townofpaxton.net

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 25, 2013

Meeting Location: John Bauer Senior Center 17 West Street, Paxton, MA 01612

Members Present: Peter Bogren, Jr., Chairman
John F. Malone, Vice Chairman
Frederick G. Goodrich, Clerk

Carol L. Riches, Town Administrator

Attendees: Attendee List

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

250th Anniversary Celebration

- The Paxton 250th Anniversary Committee will be holding a Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser on Saturday, March 9th from 8:00 to 11:00AM at the 1st Congregational Church. Tickets will cost \$5 for adults and \$3 for children up to 8 years of age. Children under three will be free. Tickets are now on sale at Paxton Marketplace, the COA Office in the White Building, and Richards Memorial Library. You may also contact Bob at (508) 792-4662 or Anita at (508) 798-5092.

Senator Stephen Brewer and Representative Kim Ferguson

- Senator Brewer took the opportunity to reintroduce himself back to Paxton. Senator Brewer at one point was the Senator for Paxton and then his district changed but now he is back, and wanted to ensure the Board that he understands the difficulties that the town faces. His first priority is to local government, and to help the town get as much as possible in local aid from the state.
- Representative Ferguson also wanted to welcome herself to Paxton. We are a new town in her district. She now has all five of the Wachusett Regional towns in her district. We are working on Local Aid, Chapter 90 and school transportation in getting as much relief as possible to the towns on these items.
- **(JM)** Expressed the ongoing difficulties that the town has in trying to keep up with the ever increasing budget that WRSD demands each year. We are at the point that we are putting our employees in danger with the budget cuts that we have had to make. We are protecting our town to the best of our ability, but this cannot continue. The unfunded mandates that come down from the state are

another problem. For example the Storm Water Management program would be a huge cost to Paxton that we cannot afford.

- Senator Brewer stated that the last thing we always cut and the first thing to be resorted is Local Aid. The state has reached its highest bond rating ever, and we are always trying to find ways to be fiscally responsible.
- Representative Ferguson expressed that she is working on getting others to understand the issues that you face with having a regional school system.
- **(PB)** Regional transportation was to be funded 100% and currently we are trying to get back up to 80%. We have run across the same issue with the funding of the Quinn Bill. The towns have to pick up some of that as well.
- **(FG)** The unfunded mandates are difficult. Transportation for the region is needed. The safety of our town is critical. We have planned for an increase to our Local Aid, and now it looks like it is going to be level funded.
- Representative Fergus stated that the numbers that came out in January are not set in stone, and won't be until June.
- **(FG)** That makes it very difficult for the towns to set their budgets.
- **(PB)** What does the Sequester mean to us?
- Senator Brewer stated that it will definitely have a resonating effect and it will come down quickly.

Ground Lease updates

- Town Counsel was present to update the Board on the recent events with the Ground Lease. We had the first issue with the AGO in regards to the public work, but that has been answered and we should be all set, however we still have the outstanding issue of the prevailing wages which has not been answered. You have been provided with three documents. The Ground Lease Mortgage Protection Provision, The Tax Credit Regulatory Agreement, and the Ground Landlord Estoppel Agreement. I am comfortable with you agreeing to these. I do have one concern that if there is a casualty and the property has to be demolished, that the property will be graded and given back to the town in the same manor which it is given initially. However the lender wants to be able to sweep the funds in order to cover the cost on such an incident.
- **(PB)** That is back to the same issue that we had initially.
- Town Counsel stated that this issue needs to be resolved in order for the lender to move forward with the developer.
- **(JM)** Asked of Dana Angelo (EA Fish), what is your time frame?
- Dana replied that we are still ok, and we are focus on getting this done.
- Town Counsel also informed the Board that the Planning Board bond issue has been resolved as of today.
- **Motion (PB) seconded (JM) to sign the agreement and leave it in escrow until all matters have been resolved. Unanimous, all in favor.**
- **(CR)** EA Fish has asked if one of the Board members would be authorized to sign if there are minor changes that need to be made, so they would not have to wait for the next Select Board meeting to get approval.
- **Motion (JM) seconded (FG) to authorized the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to authorize any minor changes that may occur. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Deficit spend snow and ice

- (PB) We moved away from the sand and salt mixture and went to the new mix. This is something that we should look at next year?
- (CR) It's been an unusual year. Normally we would have been ok with this. We can't reduce the budget. Mike Putnam feels that \$35,000.00 should get us through the rest of the season.
- (FG) Could we go back to the state for additional funding?
- (CR) You could by writing a letter.
- **Motion (FG) seconded (JM) grant permission to extend the deficit spending for the snow and ice account. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Ambulance Service

- (PB) Read letter from Chief Conte stating the following:
As you are aware over the past six months I have been disappointed with the receipts collected through Spencer Rescue Squad. This led to discussions with the Board in October to look into the possibility of separating from this service and in doing so obtained licenses to run our own ambulance service. It was my intention to transition to a an independent service over the next eighteen months but following the recent news of Spencer Rescue Squad's financial difficulties we felt it was in the best interest of the Town to speed up the process. We met with the UMASS Medial Director and the OEMS Field Inspector who provided us with valuable information and encouragement as to how to proceed with the process. I am now at the point where I need a formal vote of the Board of Selectmen to satisfy the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. The Paxton Board of Selectmen is in full support of the Paxton EMS and Fire Departments pursuing BLS and ALS licensure in order to provide the town with an ambulance. I initially supplied a budget as an idea of the funding that may be necessary. I now provide a new work in progress budget for your review. These numbers maybe revised again prior to our budget meeting with the Board and Finance Committee.
- (FG) Will the training come from UMASS?
- (CR) We can do training with UMASS and other towns as well. This is in preparation, in case we have to break away from Spencer Rescue. We are still working to resolve things with Spencer Rescue.
- **Motion (FG) seconded (JM) that the Paxton Board of Selectmen is in full financial support of the Paxton EMS and Fire Departments pursuing BLS and ALS licensure in order to provide the town with an ambulance service Unanimous, all in favor.**

Recent Resignations

- **Motion (JM) seconded (FG) with regret and appreciation accept the following resignations. Scott Runstrom from MPIC Richard Fenton from**

the Town Hall Renovation Committee, the Town Buildings Needs Study Committee, The Open Space and Recreation Committee and the Scenic Byway Committee. Unanimous, all in favor.

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- **Motion (JM) seconded (FG) to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for February 11, 2013. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Audit Services

- **(CR)** Request to pass over this until the Town Accountant and I can look into other auditing companies.

Town Administrators Update

- Twenty seven programs involving 162 cities and towns will share in \$2.25 million in Community Innovation Challenge grants for fiscal 2013.
- Paxton is part of the Regional Stormwater Coalition that received \$310,000 last year and this year will receive a further \$115,000 to include a total of 32 towns: Towns of Spencer (lead), Auburn, Charlton, Dudley, Holden, Leicester, Millbury, Oxford, Paxton, Shrewsbury, Sturbridge, Webster, West Boylston, Grafton, Hardwick, Monson, Mew Braintree, Northbridge, Northborough, North Brookfield, Palmer, Princeton, Rutland, Southbridge, Sterling, Upton, Ware, Westborough and Wilbraham.
- Paxton was also included in the Rutland Regional Animal Control application that will receive \$83,904 to consider regionalizing with the Towns of Rutland (lead), Oakham and Barre.
- The Fire Department has applied for and received a DCR grant for \$1,833.47 under the Volunteer Fire Assistant Program. This is a 50% matching grant. (See attached).

Public Session

- Mr. Jeffrey Kent inquired as to the Special Town Vote that is being held tomorrow. Mr. Kent questioned as to what exactly it is that we are voting on.
- **(CR)** Explained to Mr. Kent that the Bay Path renovation project has taken out their first of three bonds and this is to determine how the town will pay for its portion. A further breakdown was given which explained that there will be two more bonds, one in FY14 and FY15 which will carry out for 30 years, and that the town can go as many times as its wants for a debt exclusion if it fails.
- Mr. Kent expressed concern that prior to him coming to this meeting he did not feel like a very informed voter on this matter.
- **(PB)** Expressed that Bay Path held informational meeting and they were present at our last meeting to speak on this very topic. We have done what we can to get the word out.

Trash Fee – 2 Pond Street

- **Motion (FG) seconded (JM) to suspend the trash fee for 2 Pond Street and to be noted that this is not a matter of routine. This is a special consideration. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Next meeting scheduled for Monday, March 11, 2013, at 7:00pm.

Adjourned Meeting at 8:48pm, Unanimous all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Graf-Parsons, Administrative Assistant

Documents filed with Meeting Minutes:

Agenda

Attendance list

Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:

Town Administrators Update

Peter Bogren, Jr.
Chairman

John F. Malone
Vice Chairman

Frederick G. Goodrich
Clerk